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VIA EMAIL - chubert@reviewboard.ca

Mackenzie Valley Review Board
Yellowknife, NT

Attention: Chuck Hubert

Dear Mr. Hubert.

Re: Some Dene Tha' First Nation Values for Identification and Assessment within the draft Terms of Reference for the proposed Pine Point Mine Project and EA2021-01

Thank you for the opportunity for the Dene Tha' First Nation (DTFN) to be involved in the gathering and use of traditional knowledge in relation to the proposed *Pine Point Mine Project* (the "Project") and *EA2021-01* (the "EA").

As you know, the global Covid-19 pandemic has had, and continues to have, profound detrimental effects for us all, including specifically, review of the Project and its EA processes. DTFN has not been able to conduct our reviews using our preferred approaches or methods, that in normal times would include large forum meeting events with focus group interview and mapping exercises. Despite these challenges, we have managed to assemble a brief listing and explanation of some DTFN traditional values combining some existing previous work and also a more limited set of Project-specific telephone interviews. DTFN believes that many of these values may be found within the Project assessment area - and as such - would be useful for the EA process, including its draft Terms of Reference (the "ToR") at the following sections: [2.2.1] *Valued Components*; [3.6] *Use and Incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge*; [4.2.8] *Indigenous Land Use*; [4.2.10] *Heritage Resources*; and possibly others.

Please kindly let us know if there are any questions or requests for additional information.

Yours truly,

DENE THA' FIRST NATION
[for]
Fred Didzena, Director of Lands Department

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fred Didzena', is written over the printed name of the Director of Lands Department.

cc. DTFN Chief and Council
enc. TABLE A: Some DTFN Values for Identification and Assessment within the EA2021-01 Terms of Reference

TABLE A:

Some Dene Tha' First Nation Values for Identification and Assessment within the EA2021-01 Terms of Reference

DENE THA' VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF VALUE
<u>ECO-CULTURAL -TYPE</u>	<u>Important ecological / bio-physical landscape features with significant cultural and traditional use values.</u>
MINERAL LICK	Critical wildlife zones and trail networks, necessary for persistence and survival of wildlife, especially moose.
NATURAL SPRING	Sacred areas of rare plants, wildlife, and materials, including anecdotes of medicinal power, healing and renewal.
NESTING SITE	Gathering sites for bird eggs and needed for conservation and protection of endangered and rare species, like Trumpeter Swans.
PLANT AND MEDICINE GATHERING	Plant derived country foods, materials and medicine gathering areas, with buffer sizes dependent upon target-vegetation patch size
WETLAND	Wetlands support many critical ecosystem/wildlife functions, including providing clean water and supporting habitats for many species that are traditionally harvested. Wetlands are areas that should be avoided completely.
<u>CABIN -TYPE</u>	<u>Cabins are places for families and cohorts of, oft-times intergenerational harvesters to gather, share cultural knowledge and process traditional foods. The meaningful use of Cabins relies upon surrounding intact areas that are sufficient, suitable and preferred for harvesting and traditional uses. Cabins of this type, in common law terms, are described as "Sundown Cabins".</u>
CABIN	DTFN notes; "... cabins are built in areas possessing the following characteristics: big timber with lots of squirrels; higher ground; good vehicle access; undisturbed around cabin; no noise or industrial activity; lots of beaver ponds; near muskeg with lots of marten tracks; good solar access/exposure; adjacency to watercourses/waterbodies; and; others." (Stevenson, et al. 2014)
<u>CAMP -TYPE</u>	<u>Camps are critical traditional use and occupation areas requiring protection - typically used by many community members over many years, to coincide with important traditions and traditional livelihood pursuits, at various times throughout the year.</u>
CAMPSITE	Campsites are focal points of landscape-based activities, within the 'seasonal round', as informed by inter-generational Traditional Knowledge. Camp location and use is typically coincidental with seasonal timing for the best yields of harvested plants, animals and materials, around the camp area – other camps uses include youth and elder gatherings, knowledge and language transmission and for teaching traditional values and oral histories of the lands, communities and people. "The Dene Tha' elders described traveling in a "circular motion," from Tu Lonh (End of the Water), to Long Lake (Rainbow Lake), to Tamarack Hill, to Tsa Zaghe (Beaver Creek tributary), and back to Tu Lonh on their seasonal searches for game." (DTFN, 2019)
CACHE (TRAPLINE)	The traditional activity of trapping requires a series of trails, camps, and trapline implement storage and staging areas. These can be found in registered and non-registered traplines. Trapline caches are also areas of day/overnight camps where trap implements are stored and maintained, and where fur bearers are processed for materials and hides. Opportunistic hunting also occurs along trapline trails and cache areas. "In January and February, lynx, marten and fox are harvested. In the spring months, beaver and muskrat are harvested." (Ibid.)
CONSTRUCTION SITE	Areas of large-size trees and timber stands upon the banks of many rivers and lakes are used traditionally for the construction of water vessels including canoes and dugouts.

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	These construction areas are also used as caches and overnight camps, where traditional hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering activities occur.
FISH WEIR	Fish weirs occur along and in-stream of fish bearing watercourses, typically, an array of large-stone structures direct the passage of fish into defined pools and channels where traditional fishing and netting activities occur (i.e.: Amber River). These fish weir areas are also important for other traditional practices and uses, including camping.
HIDE PREPARATION SITE / MEAT DRYING RACKS	Hide preparation sites are camp-type areas that are used to process meat, hides and materials for traditional use derived from ungulates and fur-bearers. Oft-times, hide preparation processing implements are stored up in trees with the presence of moose racks, teepee, firepits, smoke houses made from local timbers and materials, These sites are often dismantled/hidden/cached immediately after use, as cultural protocols require that traditional users do not leave unnecessary disturbances or any garbage/waste from camp use or associated food, medicine and hide processing.
LEAN-TO/TEEPEE POLES/TENT-FRAME/CACHE	Camp areas with evidence of Lean-to/Teepee Poles/Tent-Frame/Cache construction are important areas for traditional uses and the presence of these constructions are evidence of intermittent and regular traditional uses and activities by one or more cohorts of hunter/trappers.
<u>GEOPOLITICAL-TYPE</u>	These geopolitical-type areas are typically established to delineate boundaries for the administration and management of resources and activities within. Older examples are mostly unilaterally imposed, some newer examples are co-developed by using principles of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
TRAPLINE	Areas that should be planned for and managed in a manner that have always have intact areas of sufficient, suitable and preferred fur bearing habitat within each trapline, at any given time.
<u>SACRED -TYPE</u>	<i>"The Dene Tha' are very spiritual people. Spirituality permeates every facet of life, from how people conduct themselves on the land, to harvesting medicine, to performing Tea Dance ceremonies."</i> (Ibid.)
ARCHAEOLOGICAL	Archaeological values are typically not just about 'stones and bones', but are sites of continued longevity with rich oral history and tradition that are associated with long-term patterns of Dene Tha' occupation and use - often these sites contain 'layers' of artifacts and denote a periodic, intermittent or continuous history of traditional uses, that continue into the present day.
BURIAL RACK	Traditional pre-contact era funeral ceremony with consecrated remains of the deceased, respectfully wrapped and placed in a large tree. This is not a contemporary practice, however; many of these trees and tree-stands are still in place. Please see "Grave"-type value noted-below.
CEREMONY SITE	Communal, familial or individualistic in nature, this value type is not further described, except in very general terms, to involve formalities and procedures that have common characteristics, yet are unique to each instance and practitioner.
DRUM/TEA/SUN DANCE	<i>"The Tea Dance (or "Dahot s'ethe") is a deeply religious ceremony for the Dene Tha'. The reason to have a Tea Dance is revealed to the prophets or spiritual leaders of the community through their dreams. A Tea Dance might be held to ask for a successful hunting season, or good weather. It might also be held to commemorate a meeting with another neighbouring community, or as a burial ceremony for someone who has recently died."</i> (Ibid.)
GRAVE (INDIVIDUAL AND MULTIPLE)	<i>"In the past, people were buried along rivers or trails where people traveled." ... "It has only been relatively recently (the last 150-200 years) that people were buried with any type of grave marker, and more recently still (last 100 years) that Spirit Houses were used to mark burial sites. Bodies were sometimes put into the trees to be "taken" by the birds,</i>

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	<i>or they were put into hollowed-out logs. Often they were wrapped in canvas or tarps and placed in shallow graves in the ground.” (Ibid.)</i>
MEDICINE BUNDLE	Communal, familial or individualistic in nature, this value type is not further described, except in very general terms, to involve formalities and procedures that have common characteristics, yet are unique to each instance and practitioner.
OFFERING SITE	Communal, familial or individualistic in nature, this value type is not further described, except in very general terms, to involve formalities and procedures that have common characteristics, yet are unique to each instance and practitioner.
PLACE NAME	Special Places within Dene Tha' Traditional Territory have Dene names that can be based upon the following aspects; landforms, geography, resources, importance for traditional activities, oral history, origin stories, cultural significance, commemoration and celebration of unique, rare and special events, spiritual visions, mystical encounters and medicinal or healing properties, and others. These Place Name areas should be protected.
<u>TRAIL-TYPE</u>	<i>“The Dene Tha’ were constantly on the move, searching for food. However, this nomadic lifestyle was not random; the seasonal migration of people followed very specific patterns. People’s survival depended upon successful hunting patterns.” (Ibid.)</i>
TRAILS	<i>“Today, [motorized vehicles] are used to travel to places in the winter that are inaccessible by roads.” (Ibid.)</i> Trails are increasingly important close to communities, as many harvesters do not have sufficient economic resources, licences, and liability coverage to own, maintain and operate a motor-vehicles to access harvesting areas outside of ‘walking’ distance from community - many of these non-vehicle band members are also of youth, single-parent or elder status and are the most vulnerable to perturbations in food security availability and isolation to communal traditional food sharing networks. Trails should be treated as a continuous series of ‘points along a line’ and protected for harvesting to extend at a distance of at least 100m.
WAGON TRAIL	<i>“Many present day roads and highways were once the Dene Tha’ pack, wagon and horse trails. For example, the Habay Road was once a wagon road used by the Dene Tha’.</i> Today, it is the main route for industry to travel to the Zama oil fields and beyond. The original wagon trail from the Chinchaga River to High Level is also still visible today.” (Ibid.) Many of these wagon trails are evident and segments of them still used, all segments should be geo-located and traversed their entire lengths, to be protected as conserved as provincial historic resources and to recreate these travel routes and harvesting trails between communities and, to and from important ‘elsewhere’ s’. Wagon Trails were previously maintained passively with high utility and use and actively, with traditional burning practices to: promote ungulate populations, berry patches and access, and; to reduce fuel loading and existential threats from wildfire.
OTHERS	Including, Landforms, Water, Air, Species, Habitats, Vegetation, Organic and Non-organic items.

Reference:

Dene Tha' First Nation. 2019. Dene Tha' Private and Confidential Traditional Use Study (TUS) Database. [Un-published].

Dene Tha' First Nation. (2019). *Our History* [website]. Retrieved Dec 18, 2019, from <http://denetha.ca/history>

Stevenson, M. et al. 2014. Dene Tha' Traditional Use and Knowledge in Relation to Husky Oil Leases on Dene Tha' Traditional Territory. [un-published]. pp. (8-9).